

Gerry also helped many visitors to our Capitol cope during a time of tragedy.

He gave the first public tour of the Capitol after two police officers were killed in 1998.

In 2001, Gerry gave the first tour when the Capitol reopened following the terrorist attacks of September 11.

In my opinion, this is a testament to the dedication and the patriotism Gerry has shown during his many years of service to our country.

In May 2007, Gerry was the victim of a brutal home invasion and assault. After this senseless act of violence, he was told by his doctors that he may never walk again.

But Gerry has never taken no for an answer.

After months in the hospital and grueling rehabilitation, Gerry returned to the Capitol, eventually taking a job as an elevator operator.

Again, Gerry impressed all of us in the Senate with his dedication and his generous spirit.

Gerry will soon begin a job at the Department of Health and Human Services. I know I speak for all of us when I say that HHS is lucky to have him.

Gerry makes the Senate a brighter place, and I am truly sorry to see him go. I admire his optimism, his dedication, and especially his courage in the face of adversity.

I wish Gerry well as he moves onto this exciting new challenge.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING LAURA ZISKIN

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, today I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Laura Ellen Ziskin, one of Hollywood's most influential film producers, activists, and philanthropists. Laura Ziskin passed away on June 12, 2011, at her home in Santa Monica, CA, after a 7-year battle with cancer. She was 61 years old.

A native of the San Fernando Valley, Laura Ziskin was born on March 3, 1950, to Mae and Jay Ziskin. In 1973, Ziskin graduated from the University of Southern California's School of Cinematic Arts and began working in the entertainment industry first as a game show writer, and then as a personal assistant to producer and director Jon Peters, with whom she would work on the 1976 Barbra Streisand remake of "A Star Is Born."

Over the next three decades, Laura Ziskin became one of the world's most successful female producers. Ziskin's fame quickly grew with her production of 1985's "Murphy's Romance," 1988's "D.O.A.," 1990's megahit "Pretty Woman," and 1991's "What About Bob?" Ziskin's films were both critically acclaimed and well received, with "As Good As It Gets," 1997, "The Thin Red Line," 1998, "Fight Club," 1999, and the recent blockbuster Spider-Man films. In 2002, Laura Ziskin would also

become the first woman to ever produce the Academy Awards—again repeating the feat in 2007.

Laura Ziskin devoted her time and celebrity to improving the lives of others. She gave her support by serving on the boards of organizations such as the National Council of Jewish Women and Education First and was honored by many others, such as the Big Sisters of Los Angeles, the Women's Image Network Award, the Producers Guild of America, City of Hope, and her own alma mater, USC's School of Cinematic Arts. I was also proud to present her with a "Woman Making History" Award for her wonderful work.

When Ziskin was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2004, she immediately became heavily involved in creating a new model for cancer research. In 2008, she founded the nonprofit Stand Up To Cancer, SU2C, in collaboration with friends and colleagues, Katie Couric and Sherry Lansing and the Entertainment Industry Foundation, among others. Ziskin used her film production skills to be a driving force for raising funds for cancer research and support services, including by producing television specials in 2008 and 2010 that aired on major international networks.

Throughout her illness, Laura never quit either her professional or charitable work. She touched the lives of countless individuals and families who struggle with cancer by giving them hope that one day, there will be a cure. In one of her last blog postings, she urged others to take a stand. She wrote, "Take a stand—for yourself, for a loved one . . . for anyone in the fight. Let's make everyone diagnosed with cancer a survivor."

Laura Ziskin is survived by her partner, Alvin Sargent, her daughter, Julia Barry, and her son-in-law, Eli Dansky. •

FIGHTING BLINDNESS

• Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, for most people, it is a given that they are able to see the many wonderful sights the world has to offer. But in this country, more than 10 million people are affected by retinal diseases, such as retinitis pigmentosa and age-related macular degeneration, that result in blindness. These people are being robbed of their vision, plain and simple. By 2020, as the population continues to age, that number is expected to reach 15 million. These diseases might not attract much attention, but their impact on the lives of our friends, family members, and constituents is significant.

Later this month, in Baltimore, MD, the Foundation Fighting Blindness, a private nonprofit that has raised more than \$425 million in research funding, will host its national VISIONS Conference. It will gather together visually challenged people from across the United States, as well as eight other countries, along with renowned researchers committed to finding treatments and cures for these diseases and physicians providing patient care.

The Foundation will also celebrate its 40th anniversary by looking back on four decades of breakthroughs, progress, and hope in the field of retinal disease research. There is a lot to celebrate, as recent advances in research, including a number of clinical trials, have given new hope for restoring vision. Results from one breakthrough study funded in part by the Foundation Fighting Blindness show that gene therapy restored vision in patients suffering from a severe retinal disease. In fact, a 9-year-old boy who had lost his vision almost completely was able to play baseball and read the chalkboard in his class for the first time.

This life-changing work is possible thanks to the Foundation Fighting Blindness, which, through various fundraising efforts, provides the capital necessary to launch innovative, results-oriented research—the kind of research promising enough to draw funding from other sources, such as the National Eye Institute, one of the National Institutes of Health. Now, as the momentum continues to build, a partnership between the private and public sectors is crucial to eradicating blinding diseases.

I congratulate the Foundation Fighting Blindness on its 40th anniversary. With the help of this organization and the National Eye Institute, research will continue to flourish until cures are realized. •

BOWDLE, SOUTH DAKOTA

• Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to the 125th anniversary of the founding of the city of Bowdle, SD. Bowdle, like many of the cities in South Dakota, was founded for its position along the railroad tracks.

Alex M. Bowdle, an employee for Chicago & Milwaukee Railroad, founded Bowdle in 1886. He chose the location for its readily available access to clean water. This water was essential for the trains to use in their boilers, and helped to keep the trains moving on schedule. The water also greatly benefited area farmers who needed it for irrigation of their crops.

Bowdle through the years has continued to be a thriving community. Their commitment to education can be seen in the graduates of the Bowdle School District. In addition city of Bowdle has many outdoor recreation options including pheasant hunting and the Bowdle Golf Club, which residents believe is one of the best courses in the State.

Bowdle's residents have a strong local community and take pride in their city. To celebrate the momentous occasion the city is planning to hold a street dance with live music, along with many other events to bring the surrounding community together to share stories and experiences of the beloved city of Bowdle.

I am proud to publicly honor Bowdle on this memorable occasion. Small

communities such as Bowdle are part of the backbone of our great State, and help to preserve our rich frontier history and deep-seated character. Bowdle exemplifies what it means to be a great South Dakota community.●

BRYANT, SOUTH DAKOTA

● Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the community of Bryant, SD, on reaching the 125th anniversary of its founding. Bryant is a community-oriented town located in Hamlin County and will be celebrating its quasiquicentennial the weekend of June 24 to 26.

Founded in 1887 upon the completion of the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul railroads, the small town embraced its origins and was named after the local railroad official. Bryant prides itself on its fire preparedness and is home to a dedicated volunteer fire department.

The importance of community to the town is evident in the presence of their well-maintained auditorium and parks which host town gatherings, baseball games, dances, craft fairs, and suppers. Bryant will celebrate this milestone with many activities including a car and tractor show, a parade, and even fireman's games.

South Dakota is built on the values and spirit of small communities like Bryant. It is because of our small tight-knit communities that many choose to call South Dakota home. I congratulate the citizens of Bryant on their accomplishments over the last 125 years and look forward to seeing their future endeavors.●

CONDE, SOUTH DAKOTA

● Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the community of Conde, SD, on reaching the 125th anniversary of its founding. Located in Spink County, this small, close-knit community will be celebrating its quasiquicentennial the weekend of June 24 to 26.

The building of railroad branches in South Dakota by the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad created growth for numerous towns. Amongst the newly established area, the town of Conde was founded in 1886. This railroad town was formerly known as Coral until April 15, 1882. A railroad official's wife selected the name in honor of the Conde family of France and the French town of Conde.

Conde, SD, "The Place to Call Home," is known for its beautiful scenery and outdoor activities. Conde is settled in the rolling Coteau Hills and is an excellent area for Ring Neck Pheasant and White Tail Deer hunting. The city of Conde still has a variety of businesses located in this community. Conde will commemorate its anniversary with a weekend of events. The community has planned to host live music bands, an all-school reunion, a

5K "Roll and Stroll" through the beautiful town of Conde, and plenty of food vendors.

Conde exemplifies the hometown community spirit of South Dakota. After 125 years, the community of Conde is still thriving, and it is my honor to publicly congratulate the citizens of Conde on reaching this commendable milestone.●

HECLA, SOUTH DAKOTA

● Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the town of Hecla, SD, on reaching the 125th anniversary of its founding. This small town in Brown County has flourished from its humble pioneer origins to a vibrant South Dakotan community.

The completion of the Dakota Central Railroad, known later as the Chicago Northwestern, breathed life into this region of Brown County, and the community of Hecla was born in 1886. The railroad was essential to the progress of the town as it provided a means to get supplies, export harvests, and transport mail. Mystery surrounds the naming of Hecla as the railroad crew decided to name the town after the volcano, Mt. Hekla, in Iceland for unknown reasons.

Today, Hecla is a progressive small town community. It features several local businesses, including grain elevators, lodging sites, banks, restaurants, meat processors, and insurance agencies, and is home to several churches. Hecla will be commemorating its anniversary with a celebration on the weekend of June 25th-26th. The town plans to celebrate with many events including a parade and a dance to be held on Hecla's Main Street. The events of the weekend promise to provide great opportunities to celebrate such a historic milestone.

Most South Dakotans call small towns like Hecla home. Even 125 years after its founding, Hecla still exemplifies what it means to be a great South Dakota community. I am proud to publicly honor Hecla on this memorable occasion and congratulate the people of Hecla on their achievements.●

LANGFORD, SOUTH DAKOTA

● Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the 125th anniversary of the founding of Langford, SD. Langford served historically as a city born from the railroads, and for many residents was the first stop to a new life on the prairie.

Founded in 1886, Langford was settled as the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad Company continued to lay their track across the prairie. Sam Denton originally surveyed the 190-acre plot overlooking the South Dakota countryside. John A. Edmunds' hardware store was the first business established in Langford. The store was delivered prebuilt as a shanty. The very next day a blacksmith shop was opened with several churches soon to follow.

From its earliest days, Langford has been marked by a strong sense of community with residents gathering frequently in the Langford Opera House, now the Legion Hall. Langford at one time boasted five schoolhouses, and still continues this commitment to education with the Langford Area School District.

Residents plan to celebrate the 125th with many activities, including a parade, car show, softball tournament, and a Sunday service. Main Street in Langford will be filled with the pride of all the residents from the area, past and present.

A hundred twenty five years after its founding, Langford continues to be a vibrant community and a great asset to South Dakota. I am proud to honor the achievements of Langford on this memorable occasion.●

TURTON, SOUTH DAKOTA

● Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to the 125th anniversary of the founding of Turton, SD. This small town in Spink County embodies the very values that South Dakota was founded upon.

Named after Joseph Turton, one of the town's first settlers from England, the town was founded in 1886 and formally incorporated in 1907. Situated along the Groton branch of the Chicago Northwestern Railroad, Turton was originally established as a railroad town. The railroad was essential to the development of the vibrant town as it provided necessary supplies and a means to transport goods. Today, Turton is best known for their beautiful Catholic church, which was built in 1893, and is still in use today.

Residents of Turton will kick off the town's quasiquicentennial celebration and their annual St. John's Day with the Turton Community Golf Tournament, street dances, games, and banquets. To wrap up a fun filled weekend, Turton has planned a Sunday morning mass and breakfast.

Small towns like Turton symbolize what it means to be a South Dakotan community. I am pleased to recognize the achievements of Turton, and to offer my congratulations to the residents of the town on this historic milestone.●

TEEN VOICES

● Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I ask to have printed in the RECORD the remarks of my friend Donna Brazile at the 20th anniversary celebration for Teen Voices. Teen Voices is a journalism mentoring and leadership development program for teen girls which was founded in Cambridge, MA, and creates publications which reach hundreds of thousands of young women across the world. Donna's words do great justice to what a terrific program Teen Voices is as they celebrate an important milestone, and I believe this occasion deserves special recognition in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.